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ABSTRACT

Elementary social studies textbooks in the United States were analyzed to determine the sort of information they contained about Australia. Only those texts which made substantive references to Australia were analyzed; these included 4 books for level 3, 2 for level 4, and 4 for level 6. Books examined were all published by major textbook companies: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., American Book Company, Ginn & Company, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Laidlaw Brothers, Scott Foresman, and Silver Burdett Co. The study focused on the quantity and quality of information provided relating to geography, history, aboriginal people, rural life, urban life, flora and fauna, politics, resources, popular culture, sport, ethnic groups, industry, mining, and maps. As a percentage of the total content, references to Australia ranged from 0.3% to 5%. The information presented was mainly accurate, if rather generalized. However, the overall image presented in the textbooks--that of Australians as a far off, remote group of desert dwellers, some of whom are aboriginal people who work on sheep stations, regularly attend the opera in Sydney, and go surfing--is not accurate for the great majority of the population. Australia as it is today is discussed, and recommendations are made for a more realistic approach to teaching about the country. Thirteen brief views of life in Australia written by Australian school children are appended. (RM)

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IMAGES of AUSTRALIA in Elementary Social Studies Texts: Some Alternative Strategies.

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63rd Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies,
San Francisco, 22-26 November 1983.

SO 015 323

Chairperson : Keith Harbour
Presenter : Gavin Faichney

THE PARADOX OF AUSTRALIA

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Mr Gavin Faichney, Victoria College - Burwood, Melb., Australia.

A paper presented at the 63rd Annual Meeting of The National Council for the Social Studies, San Francisco, 22-26 November, 1983.

Times of Paradox

While preparing this paper it seemed to the authors that the theme of this 63rd annual meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies - Times of Promise, Times of Paradox - was appropriate both for the conference itself, in the challenges it makes to teachers of the Social Studies, and for those of us who are interested teaching about 'down under'. In a discussion of this theme in the pre-conference publicity the point was made;

> "In their relationships to the larger political, social or economic culture, individuals' dreams and national goals are conditioned by paradoxes and diverse perceptions".[1]

It is with this question of 'diverse perceptions' that this paper and presentation is concerned.

When analyzing the way in which Australia is presented in Elementary Social Studies text books, it became apparent to the writers that either they were living in a country very different from their own experiences or there was a contradiction between the images presented in the texts and the reality as they were aware of it. It appeared that 'diverse perceptions' had given rise to a paradox about Australia.

Views of Australia

Indeed, it was reported by Jonathon King that in 1978, a group of American university students from Lewis and Clark College, Oregon, who had spent three months doing course work at Melbourne University felt, on departure, somewhat disillusioned. They had

> "expected to find 'the great outback' a part of life in modern day Australia. The fact that the bush and native animals were irrelevant to Australians almost broke their hearts. Some had even bought special boots, broad-brimmed hats and moleskins imagining in the absence of correct exposure that they would be riding to class from makeshift mustering camps pitched along the Yarra".[2]

The contradictory nature of Australia is not a new phenomenon. From the initial settlement of the colony of New South Wales by Europeans in 1788 to the arrival of immigrants and tourists from differing cultural backgrounds in recent years, this country has been one of paradox.

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1. N.C.S.S. Annual Meeting Preview, The National Council for the Social Studies, Washington D.C., 1983, p.1.

2. King, Jonathon, Waltzing Materialism, Harper & Row Publishers, San Francisco, 1978, p.5.

Heathcote tells us that in the nineteenth century, the nature of Australia and the 'cultural shock' that it created for both administrators and new arrivals in adapting to an environment so vastly different from those which they had previously experienced was immense. "The question was not 'What do we know?' for there were many descriptive accounts available, but rather 'What can we believe?' since there were as many different versions and interpretations of the facts as there were accounts."[3]

Historically, colloquial Australia is full of 'tall stories' with which visitors and 'new chums' are regaled. Many of these, oft-repeated, have created images and stereotypes about this country which conflict with reality. In an attempt to disipate such illusions the writers are suggesting here, that investigations by American school children of Australia, ought perhaps to commence with the focus question :

"WHAT CAN WE BELIEVE ABOUT AUSTRALIA?"

Textbooks and the Curriculum

While it may not be the case elsewhere in the world, for example Britain and Australia, clearly, in the United States of America the textbook plays a significant role in determining the curriculum that is presented in schools and is the primary instructional medium. Woodbury (1980) found that students spend between 80 percent and 95 percent of their classroom time and 90 percent of their homework time with textbooks while Brandt went so far as to state that, "Textbooks are the real curriculum; from that point of view, most curriculum in the U.S.A. is determined by textbook publishers."[4] Elementary social studies curriculum and instruction is not exempt from these charges since social studies textbooks "are generally acknowledged to be the most common method of transmitting social studies knowledge".[5]

Findings of the SPAN Project

Project SPAN, Social Studies Priorities, Practices and Needs, is a series of studies undertaken by the Social Science Education Consortium,

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3. Heathcote R.L., Back of Bourke, A Study of Land Appraisal and Settlement in Semi-arid Australia, M.U.P., Carlton, 1965, p.15.

4. Brandt, Ronald, "Overview". Educational Leadership, No.38, Nov. 1980, p.99.

5. Anyon Jean, "Elementary Social Studies Textbooks and Legitimating Knowledge", Theory and Research in Social Education, Vol.6, No.3, 1978, p.41.

Boulder, Colorado, to assess current and recent states of social studies curriculum and to provide suggestions for future directions in the field. In an investigation of curriculum materials undertaken as part of Project SPAN, Patrick and Hawke suggested that

> "widely used curriculum materials (especially hardback textbooks) are significant educational indicators ... since they are the foundation of instruction and learning in most social studies classrooms.[6]

A trend that began to emerge during the course of their investigation was the important role of texts in the movement to return to "the basics". Patrick and Hawke found,

> As social studies moves away from experimenting with scheduling ... and relevancy or inquiry oriented content and returns to traditional courses in American history and government, basal texts seem better suited than more innovative products.[7]

With curriculum materials as such important determiners of curriculum planning and instruction, there is clearly a need to investigate the contents of such materials. As the report stated,

> Textbook content reflects a society's conventions... and may change over time in response to societal change. For example, the 1960's were years of relative social upheaval that brought changes in the culture, including changes in the curricula and textbooks of the schools. Back-to-Basics is a current movement that has influenced textbook content.[8]

A major finding and recommendation of the SPAN Project then was, that "There is a need for systematic research on exactly what textbooks include, how they compare to one another, and what their major strengths and weaknesses are."[9]

Determining the Scope

From the experience of both writers during their visits to U.S.A. in recent years, 1980-83, it became apparent that the knowledge of and understanding about Australia being developed by elementary school children, whilst in most cases accurate, was a rather limited view of life in this country.

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6. Patrick, John & Hawke Sharryl, "Curriculum Materials" in Morrisset, Irving (Ed.) Social Studies in the 1980's. A Report of Project Span A.S.C.D., 1981, p.1.

7. Ibid, p.18.

8. Ibid, p.6.

9. Ibid, p.56.

In order to substantiate this, and because of the apparent importance of textbooks in the teaching of social studies in the elementary schools in the U.S.A. a content analysis of seven series of social studies textbooks for elementary schools was undertaken, in order to determine the sort of information which was being presented to children at this level. The series examined were those published by the following major textbook publishing companies :

Allyn & Bacon Inc., Concepts and Understandings. The Educational Research Council Social Science Program, 1982.

American Book Company, American Book Social Studies Program, 1982.

Ginn & Company, People and their Heritage, 1980.

Harcourt Brace-Jovanovich, Living in Our World, 1980.

Laidlaw Brothers Publishers, The Understanding the Social Science Program, 1981.

Scott Foresman, Social Studies, 1982.

Silver Burdett Company, The World and its People, 1982.

These series were supplied by the publishers to Dr Gregory Birchall for his research into the effects of the 'Back to Basics' movement on the social studies curriculum.

Collecting the Data

This process involved an analysis of the particular texts in each of these series within which substantive references to Australia were made. This resulted in an examination of four books published for level 3, two for level 4 and four for level 6. Each text was examined to determine the quantity and quality of information on Australia relating to the following headings :

geographical information	resources
historical information	popular culture
aboriginal people	sport
rural life	ethnic groups
urban life	industry
flora and fauna	mining
politics	maps

In each case the teachers edition of the text was used.

As the references to Australia were examined, the subject matter was checked off against one of the above headings, the amount of space (in half-page columns) that was allocated was noted and the accuracy of the information was evaluated against the writers' knowledge of Australia.

Assessing the Evidence

The findings of this analysis are reported in the table in Appendix 1 however they can be summarized as follows.

Neither of the writers anticipated that references to Australia would be very significant in terms of the content of the texts and in this they were not disappointed. As a percentage of the total content, references to Australia ranged from 0.3% to 5%. The level three texts had the biggest range, varying for 0.3% to 5%, with both the least and the largest amounts of space being devoted to references about Australia. The two level four texts recorded 3% and 4% according to this criteria, whilst the level six texts ranged from 0.5% to 1.9% of the total content.

With regard to inaccuracy of information, there were only four instances of this in the texts analysed and two of these occurred in one of the books. In all cases these had to do with the titles of either maps or pictures being used to illustrate the information. One involved the use of the term 'Koala bear' and a second referred to a 'rancher'. As Heathcote commented :

> "the actualities of the Australian scene were unfamiliar ... being unfamiliar, they were often described in unsuitable terms because the descriptions were either inadequate or they communicated a false impression"[10]

Whilst there are doubtless good reasons for using vocabulary with which the readers are familiar, particularly in the case of children, one needs to avoid using terms that will create an inaccurate picture.

The subject matter of the references tended, as we suspected, to emphasise the following aspects; the geography of the country, rural industry particularly sheep, the more exotic nature of aboriginal culture, the history of the initial European settlement and some aspects of urban living. As pointed out the information was mainly accurate if rather generalized. Typically featured was the geographic location of this isolated continent in the southern hemisphere. Australia seems to be good place to practise map skills with Sydney being given great emphasis whilst the other state capitals and cities were somewhat neglected. From exposure to this information one might be excused for conceiving of Australians as a far off, remote group of desert dwellers, some of whom

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10. Heathcote, op.cit., p.16.

are aboriginal people who work on sheep stations, regularly attend the opera in Sydney, go surfing and who own exotic pets such as kangaroos, koalas and wombats.

With the exception of owning the native animals as pets this information is valid. It applies however to about 14% of the population and has the effect of creating a stereotype about Australians which would equate with a picture of the American people as American Indian cowboys who visit Disneyland, go skiing and have racoons and beavers as pets. As you would agree such a stereotype about those who live in this great nation is not accurate for the majority of you.

Australia as it is

The proportion of Australians living in urban areas (centres of more than 1000 people) is 85.7%. The city dwelling Australian drives his car on the left hand side of the streets and freeways and works in an office or factory. About 70% of them live in their own houses in suburbia where they watch television, go jogging and worry about their cholesterol levels. If it all gets a bit too much, he goes water skiing, snow skiing, scuba-diving, gold fossicking or simply grabs a nice cold beer and watches football (Australian Rules or Soccer) or cricket with his mates. For the Christmas holidays - summertime - he goes camping to the beach. This is of course simply creating another stereotype, the point being however, that most of us are city dwellers with all the qualities, frustrations and characteristics that such a lifestyle brings.

When comparing figures from the most recent censuses held in both Australia and U.S.A. we find the following :

	U.S.A. 1980 CENSUS		AUSTRALIA 1981 CENSUS	
Males	110,032,294		7,267,076	
Females	116,472,530		7,309,254	
Total	226,504,852		14,576,330	
Urban	166,965,380	73.7%	12,491,441	85.7%
Rural	59,539,445	26.3%	2,071,915	14.2%
Migratory	-		12,974	

11

11. All figures used in this paper are based on the 1980 U.S. Census and the 1981 Australian Census.

In addition, the American states of California 23,668,562, New York 17,557,288 and Texas 14,228,383 all have larger populations than the total population of Australia, despite the fact that our 36,735 km (about 23,000 miles) of coastline encloses an area approximately the same as mainland U.S.A.

It is also perhaps of interest that Australia's population is growing at an annual rate of 1.7% and it is one of the ten fastest growing nations in the western developed world and 25% of Australian families are headed by woman. It should also be noted that the capital cities of each of our six states are located on the coast, a result of the history of our settlement by Europeans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and that two of these Melbourne 2,722,817 and Sydney 3,280,315 account for 41% of the total population of Australia.

Recommendations

It appears to the writers that as members of the 85.7% of Australians who live in the urban situation, the images being presented in these textbooks do not equate with the reality which most of us experience. A more realistic approach to teaching about Australia would be to examine the lifestyles of urban Australians. Three possible means of doing this are suggested below

(i) The focus question suggested earlier - What can we believe about Australia? - could be examined with the children exploring such ideas as

The physical environment of Australia is diverse.
Most Australians live in urban settings.
Many Australians live in their own houses.
The Australian population is made up of a variety of cultural groups.
Most Australians live in the coastal areas.

These of course are only suggestions and many other such statements could be similarly developed.

By using the materials and information in the booklets provided children could gather information and prepare assignments explaining such themes. The concepts of Similarity and Differences would be illustrated by such work with Change and Interdependence also being important. In order to develop more realistic understanding with the children the reasons for the apparent similarities and differences need to be explored.

> "Only in this way can we begin to develop meaningful perceptions with the children and we will of necessity be going beyond the materialistic and technological culture when we start asking the children Why?" [12]

(ii) A second approach would be to undertake a case study of two cities, e.g. San Francisco and Sydney, Melbourne and Seattle. An alternative to this might be to use one of the Australian state capitals and the capital of the state in which the children live. Such aspects as the geographic location, the historical development, the commerce, the industry, the ethnic composition, the urban lifestyle, the central business district, etc. could be explored. Some of the material provided would be of use here and the Australian Information Service and Consulates would be able to assist with additional information, films and slide kits. Concepts such as Change, Location, Environment, Similarities, Differences etc. would again be important.

(iii) Jerome Bruner suggested that any subject can be taught to children in some form. As he points out;

> "the task of teaching a subject to a child at any particular age is one of representing ... that subject in terms of the child's way of viewing things". [13]

In light of this it has occurred to us that a third approach to teaching about Australia to your elementary school children might be to use as a major input some views of life in Australia by our school children. To this end, Appendix II comprises such information.

Which ever approach you care to choose we wish you good luck with it and hope that as a result of these thoughts the children you are working with will benefit as they learn about 'down under'.

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12. Faichney, G., "Why teach about another Culture?". Paper presented at the 60th Annual Meeting of National Council for the Social Studies New Orleans, Nov. 1980, p.2.

13. Bruner, Jerome S., The Process of Education, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1960, p.33.

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APPENDIX I : RESULTS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS OF ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Maps	19													
Diagrams	1				1			1						
Pictures	3	4	5	11	10	7	3	1	2	1	3	5	2	
Text (Columns)	20¾	7	8½	12	5	2	3½	2	1½	2½				1 mention

- This table represents the total findings in all the texts examined in the areas indicated.
- The findings for Geography also relate to the areas of Maps which included both world maps, regional maps and individual maps relating to physical characteristics, political groups, location in particular hemispheres, climate, maps of continents. Some of these had explanatory notes as well.

KEY

A = Geography
B = History
C = Aborigines
D = Rural Life
E = Urban Life
F = Flora and Fauna
G = Politics
H = Resources
I = Industry
J = Mining
K = Transport
L = Sport
M = Popular Culture
N = Ethnicity

APPENDIX II - Childrens' views of their life in Australia.

OUR STREET

In Mt. Waverley, there is a street which is called Yarrabee Court. There are thirteen houses in the court. It is very quiet at night because no cars can go through our street since it is a dead end.

There is lots of room to play as well. We have a back yard with trees in it, some of them we climb and some are just for looking at. There are lots of children around us to play with. At the back of our house there is a small park where we often play cricket or soccer.

Yarrabee court is next to some golf links. We have a nice view from our terrace looking out over the golf links towards the city.

Three of the families in the court are relatives; the Eises, the Faichneys and the Brookes. In these families there are seven children. Sometimes we go on holidays together and we often have tea together. When we don't have enough food or some things that we need we just go next door and borrow it. It is very handy living near relatives because when we need a baby sitter we just go next door.

Because our street is on the side of a hill and it is a dead end, it is good fun to ride our bikes and scooters down the hill. Since we know everyone in the street they don't mind us doing that as long as we are not too noisy.

Sonya Brooke
Year Two
Essex Heights P.S. - Mt. Waverley.

OUR HOUSE

Most families in Australia live in their own house. We live at 5 Yarrabee Court, Mt. Waverley, a suburb of Melbourne. Our house is made of brick and has a tiled roof. We have 4 bedrooms, a kitchen/family room, a utility room where mummy sews and washes clothes, 2 bathrooms with toilets and showers, a lounge and dining room and a den where we watch television. There is carpet on all the floors except the kitchen, utility room and one of the bathroom areas. Our grandad lives in a flat downstairs at the back of the house and as well there is a rumpus room downstairs where we can play on wet days. We have our own back yard which has some lawn, gum trees, a vegetable garden,some swings and a swimming pool. In Ian's and my bedroom we have bunks. They are shaped like an L. I sleep on the top bunk. On the walls there are posters of the Grand Canyon, Colorado, Seattle and Sydney. We have also put on our bedroom wall our swimming certificates and football clinic awards. Next door to our bedroom is Katherine's room. She sleeps in a cot. We have no fence in our front garden where there are rose bushes, tree ferns, some flowering plants and steps leading down from the street to our front door. What sort of house do you live in?

Andrew Faichney
Year Two
Essex Heights P.S. - Mt. Waverley.

DAILY ROUTINE

Ring! Ring! my alarm has gone off at 6.15 a.m. as usual. I have a bunk which is suspended from the roof. I struggled down the ladder and got my clothes on. By 6.25 I was dressed and into the piano. I have been learning the piano since I was 5 years old and now I am 12. At 5 minutes to 7, I came out and had breakfast which dad had already made. For cereal I had cornflakes with fruit on top. Then I had toast with vegemite and a glass of milk. After breakfast I washed my face and hands and cleaned my teeth. Back into the piano again at 7.30 and I practise until we have to go to school. At 20 to 9 mum takes us to school just before the bell goes.

At 9.00 we all go into school and start work. There are 3 grade six classrooms each with about 30 people in each room. Our room has tables and chairs with lockers to put our books and pencils in. At our school there is a library, an art room, a music room and a multi-purpose room which we visit each week. The multi-purpose room is used for films and many other things as its name indicates. Our playgrounds are a reasonable size for a primary school. We have two ovals, one for the lower school and one for us. Just before lunch we have physical education with the teachers.

At 12.30 it is play time and we go outside. We usually play with a group of about 20 people either cricket or Australian rules football. Sometimes we play gang chasy with more people but most often we play one of our sports games.

School finishes at 3.30 and mum comes to pick me up. When I get home I have a drink of cordial and a toasted crumpet with honey. Then I start doing my homework. Usually we have a two week assignment and a four week project. I work for about 1½ hours and then I have dinner. Before dinner I have to set the table. For tea we often have a roast or steaks. My favorite dessert is pavlova especially with manderine pieces on it. After tea if I have finished my homework I watch T.V. At 9.30 I usually go to bed. If a good movie is on I go to bed later. When the America's Cup was on I went to bed at 7.30 and got up to watch the live telecast at 2.00. (Bad luck about the end result!)

Antony Dunstan
Year Six
Essex Heights P.S. - Mt. Waverley.

PLAYING SPORT

Hi my name is Grant. I'm twelve years old and I go to Essex Heights Primary school. Every day at 9.00 a.m. we go to school except on Saturdays and Sundays we don't go to school. During the winter months I play Football for our school and for a local club. Our school plays every Friday at 1.30 p.m. till 3.30 p.m. Our Football coach is another grade six teacher his name is Mr Rochstein, he is a good Football coach and got us into a Grand Final. Unfortunately we just lost it by one goal. I also play squash on Saturdays at 9.00 a.m. till 12.00 p.m. I love sport a lot and I am good at it,when I grow up I would like to be a P.E. teacher.

Grant Firth
Year Six
Essex Heigh[illegible].S. - Mt.Waverley.

A SCHOOL TRIP

In the morning I woke up, it was raining and I did not want to go to school, but I had to, or else I would start trouble with Mum. So I go to the door and let in little Tom, our cat. Tom runs inside and I get some food for him. Then I stamp into the living room and turn on the television, I also turn on the heater and lie down beside it. I watch T.V. until 8.00 a.m. and then I get dressed. Mum wakes up at 8.00 a.m. and has a cup of coffee and then makes lunch. Mum gets the cornflakes and put them in the plate, while I wash up. I like to have warm milk so mum warms it up. At 8.30 I leave for school. At 8.45 I come to school and put my bag inside. I leave my coat on and I got out onto the asphalt to look for my friends. When we go into class I feel like going to sleep, but of course we have to do work. Today we are going on an excursion. At 9.30 we are travelling on the bus to the museum. We got off the bus and we went into the museum. At first we spent some time waiting. We went into a classroom and the teacher there showed us some slides of Australian animals and their environments. After 30 minutes we went into this place called experilearn. It was fun because there were lots of interesting things to do and see. At the end of the morning we went back to school on the bus.

Anthony Cataland
Year Five
Killoura P.S. - East Burwood

SATURDAY MORNING

I woke up yawning and trying to rub the sleep out of my eyes. Specks like dust particles fell onto pillow. "I suppose I should get up", I thought to myself and then flopped back onto the bed with a thud. Mum came into the room and as though on cue birds outside started tweeting and cheeping as though they would never stop. "Rise and shine", said Mum. (I do not know how she can be so joyful even though she gets up at half past "FIVE"!)" "Can I have breakfast in bed?" I asked. "Use your eyes", said Mum and then plonks down toast and orange juice on the bed.

After breakfast I got up and got dressed. Dad was in the bathroom shaving. I know his routine pretty well now. He walks into the bathroom, picks up his razor and after about 20 seconds yells as he cuts himself.

Pretty soon our family is ready to go riding. My Nan shares a riding school with a lady called Miss Tunbridge. It would usually only take 10 minutes to get there from where we live but it takes us at least half an hour as we always buy donuts on the way.

It is not usually time for our ride when we get there so I go and spray a few redback spiders. I have usually killed four or five before my ride but if I haven't I try to do a few extra next week.

The horse I like best is Digger,a brown horse with a black mane and tail. She has a smooth ride but is rather lazy. After a ride of about half an hour we go up and unsaddle. Then we drive home for lunch.

Gareth Thomas
Year Six
Killoura P.S. - East Burwood.

PLAYING SPORT

Saturday morning when the sun was brightly shining, I awoke to hear the birds chirping outside my bedroom window. I let my eyes open widely before I got up out of bed to see Dad up and ready, trying to make us eat the bits of cereal left in the packet.

Peter, my brother was watching television, while dad was telling him to turn it off. Tim, my other brother came in with his eyes drooping as usual. Mum was in bed reading and Rodney, my third brother was still fast asleep. It was now time for Peter to turn the television off and go to cricket. Tim followed him later to watch the game. Dad was ready to go to the office now.

Soon after Mum had to take me to softball (a game like baseball) and had to take a cut lunch. We drove over to a huge park called Jells Park and soon the game started. My face was very hot because the catchers mask was getting sticky. We had a hard game which in the end was a draw. After softball had finished Mum and I went to the carpark to have lunch. We ate our sandwiches and then I put on my netball skirt and was on the court a few minutes later. The netball game (which is a non-contact sport in which you throw the ball without stepping or bouncing the ball) was tiring and after a terrific win we walked to the carpark. As we were driving home we stopped to watch Peter play cricket. When we got home Rodney and Dad were building a barbeque table. I went and made myself a big chocolate milkshake and had something to eat. I had to do my home-work and my brother Rodney was also doing his home-work in his bedroom. I had a friend over to sleep because the next day we had to go to a sports day. After every-one was home and had had their dinner, we all sat down and relaxed before going to bed.

Jodie Phillips
Year Six
Killoura P.S. - East Burwood

A TRIP TO BALLARAT TO VISIT THE GOLDFIELDS

The alarm clock rang and it was still dark. I got dressed and went up to the kitchen where I had rice bubbles and an egg. The suit cases were ready and we set off on the long two hour drive to the large town called Ballarat. It was pouring with rain and hail but we crossed our fingers and hoped that the weather would become fine. As soon as we got to the outskirts of Ballarat, we went straight to the tourist information office which told us where Sovereign Hill, an old gold mining town, was. We would get a tour through mines, hire coach rides, buy old goods from the various shops. There was a wood making shop, confectionaries, medicine, General store, blacksmith and billiards, plus the old Ballarat Times newspaper shop with printing press and original photographic rooms. This is only a replica but still shows the old ways in Australia. There were many other things to see like the alluvial gold fields. Alluvial gold is found on the surface. In a stream some real gold was sprinkled and children were allowed to find it. Also there was the old Eureka stockade area with a memorial and a diorama showing the malicious incident.

It was a really good tour of parts of Ballarat and I might go back again.

SATURDAY MORNINGS

I awoke with a start. My alarm clock was buzzing in my ear. I reached out a hand and scrawled around for it. Finally, after knocking over my torch and lamp, I found it and turned it off. As I got out of bed I found a sunbeam peeping out from behind the blind. As soon as the blind was up the room was filled with light. I went to the wardrobe and opened the door and got out a pair of jeans and a top. While I dressed I thought of what I would do that day. Then I made my bed while listening to my brother snore; after straightening up the sheets, shaking the doona and fluffing up my pillow I went to get my breakfast. Just as I was finishing my breakfast, my brother and Dad came out. Dad wanted to to to K-mart, a department store, and my brother had to play tennis; so I went outside to swing on our tyre swing. After bumping into the tree a few times I decided to jump on the trampoline until I was worn out. I went inside and was surprised to see that it was lunch time.

Susan Brent
Year Five
Killoura P.S. - East Burwood

SUNDAY AT THE MARKET

I woke up on Sunday morning to find that everyone except me was awake. I put on my dressing gown and walked out into the kitchen. There, mum, dad and my brother Joe were all having breakfast. I said good morning to them and sat down to have my breakfast.

When we had all finished breakfast, Joe suggested that we ought to go to the Wantirna Market. Wantirna Market is really a drive-in theatre which on Sunday mornings is used for a market. Dad said that it was a good idea so we all got our coats because it was a cold day and went in the car to the market.

When we arrived we paid our money, parked the car and then went for a walk around the stalls. We were nearing the end of a row of stalls, when Mum and I came to one that had a small box containing four puppies. We asked the man how much they were and he replied thirty-seven dollars each. He told us that they were Chihauhua's crossed with Australian Terriers.

We saw Dad and Joe coming along behind us and we called them over to the stall. I asked Dad if we could buy one of the puppies. We bought a puppy for $30.00 for that was all mum had in her purse. We named him Tiny, and as we were driving home he fell asleep.

When we got home we fed him a drink of warm milk. Then we got a box from our garage, put an old jumper in there and as soon as we put him in the box he fell asleep again.

This is how I got my pet dog, Tiny.

Jane Spiteri
Year Five
Killoura P.S. - East Burwood

THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SHOW

It was 7.30 a.m. and I was lazily lying in bed. I was feeling very comfortable and the sun was streaming through the sunlit room. The birds were chirping outside and there seemed nothing in the world that could go wrong. Suddenly Mum walked in with a grin on her face she said that we were going to the Show that day. I leapt with joy as I had feared that we would not be allowed to go this year. Quickly I opened up my piggy bank to see if I had enough money to buy some things. I was very excited so after getting dressed I went into the kitchen for breakfast. I walked into the warm room and the smell of bacon, eggs and toast filled the air. It was a nice meal! I felt fresh and active after a shower and quite soon was dressed and ready to go. After a lot of commotion we boarded the car and set off to the railway station. We decided to go by train because it is impossible to park the car at the show grounds. We arrived just in time and I and the family jumped into the train. It was so crowded that I felt as if I was in a tin of sardines. With a jolt we set off to the show. It was stuffy in the train so the doors were opened and the lovely breeze filtered in through the crowded carriage.

When we arrived at the show we paid at the gate and went in. There was a lovely smell in the air coming from the animals and food. By now my stomach was growling and I was feeling hungry. After a lot of confusion we found some lunch and soon every one (except mum) either had an 'Aussie' pie or hot dog. We sat down and discussed what we were going to do. Animals is what mum and dad wanted to see so we walked hurriedly over to the animals. We were just in time for the cat show. They were beautiful and walked proudly around the ring. There were many varieties. I think I liked the big white fluffy cats best. We went out to the stables. I admired the beautiful horses. The pigs and cows smelt a bit but they must have been good because they had blue ribbons on them. We had a good look at the cute baby animals then we went hunting for show bags. I got a bubble gum one it had some very good and interesting things. There were some other good show bags such as the Cadbury Chocolate bag and Chemist bag. I was getting bored so my two sisters and I went to queue up for a ride. That ride was one I couldn't forget!!! We queued up for a go on the Mad Mouse. All the time I felt a bit shakey at the knees. We finally boarded on and set off with a whizz. The cool wind was blowing through my hair and just then I gave a scream and we just about went off the edge, it kept doing that until the end of the ride. When we came off I felt very shakey. The rest of the day was spent on doing things until the merry ferris wheel lit up and the night was in full swing. We couldn't stay for night as we were very tired. We went home again and after a delicious dinner of steak, salad and ice-cream I went off to bed and dreamt about the lovely day I had had.

Kim McDonald
Year Six
Essex Heights P.S. - Mt. Waverley.

WEEKENDS

I woke up about 6.00 a.m., which is the normal time for me, and whilst everyone else is asleep I watch cartoons on the television.

I usually get dad up to take me to my basketball game. While dad is having a shower, I get dressed then we have breakfast. By now everyone else is awake and dressed.

All the family goes in our Ford Cortina, which is a manual car, to the Blackburn Basketball Stadium where I am to play with my team. During the match I fouled a member of the other team for which he got 2 free throws. My team played really well and we won by six points. We then watched some of the next game before we went home for lunch.

After lunch we went to watch my younger brother, Clayton, play his basketball game. Clayton's team was defeated 24-0.

When we got back home we played with our friends Kelly and John who live next door. We raced our Billycarts and had pile ups at the end of our street. When we finished that we just mucked around riding our bikes or skateboards for the rest of the day.

At teatime, dad who had been working in the garden while Mum watched tennis on the television called us to come inside. While I have my shower, Clayton watched television and then I watched the T.V. while he had his bath.

We all have tea after which Clayton goes to bed and Dad reads him a story. Then, when it is my turn, I read my book, listen to the tranny for a while, turn it off and go to sleep.

Paul Tarrant
Year Six
Killoura P.S. - East Burwood.

WEEKENDS

It was a Saturday morning in December, 8.15 a.m.

I woke up to the rays of the sun beaming through the window. The forecast was for a hot, sunny day of 34°. The temperature was 15° overnight, already it had reached 26°. Everybody was still asleep so I watched television. At 8.30 my sister Danni woke up, she had to get ready to go and play Squash.

When dad got up he called, "Get up boys, we've got work to do". My brothers replied, "O.K. dad". A few minutes later we were all up, dressed and ready to go.

First of all, we fixed up our pets. We cleaned out the rabbits cage and changed E.T's water (E.T. stands for Ernie Tortoise). By then it was 30° and it was only 10.00 a.m.

We got into the car and went to a nursery to buy some plants. We bought some tomatoes, peas, zucchinis, and cucumber seedlings. When we arrived back home we had the task of preparing rows in the vegetable garden. It was fun making channels for the water. Dad cut his finger on a sharp stone and I had to go and get a bandaid for it. We then finished off planting out the seedlings after which dad and I went to pick up Danni from the Squash courts.

After lunch mum reminded me about my homework. It was a project on Malta - the country of the week. I said, "But mum, can't I go and play cricket with my friends?" Mum wouldn't agree to that so I settled down to do my homework.

By 4 o'clock I had finished so I went and played cricket with the other boys in the street. At 5.00 p.m. we went to the park to kick the soccer ball around for an hour or so until teatime. After tea I had a shower and watched television before going to bed. I watched "CHIPS", a cricket match being played in Perth, the movie "Jaws II", and finally "Big League Soccer". I went to bed at 12.00 a.m.

Paul Meilak,
Year Six
Kilioura P.S. - East Burwood